

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 07204 01 OF 02 231750Z

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 DHA-02
ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OIC-02 HEW-04
INT-05 OES-07 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04
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O R 231626Z AUG 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 527

INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 7204

E O 11652: NA

TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION
OF MINORITIES - AUGUST 19 - AGENDA ITEM 8: THE HISTORICAL AND
CURRENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION ON THE
BASIS OF THE CHARTER OF THE UN AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS ADOPTED
BY UN ORGANS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE PROMOTION AND
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS.

REF: GENEVA 7117

1. JIMMIE DURHAM, DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY
COUNCIL ATTENDED THE FIRST WEEK OF MEETINGS OF THW SUB-COMMIS-
SION BUT LEFT GENEVA BEFORE MAKING HIS STATEMENT TO THE
S-C ABOUT CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN INDIANS. ACCORDING TO THE
MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP, DURHAM WAS FORCED TO RETURN TO NEW
YORK BECAUSE HE LACKED THE FUNDS TO REMAIN IN GENEVA.

2. INSCRIBED TO INTERVENE UNDER THE SUBJECT AGENDA ITEM,
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PAGE 02 GENEVA 07204 01 OF 02 231750Z

DURHAM EVIDENTLY HAD HOPED TO SPEAK DURING THE A.M. MEETING
BUT LENGTHY PRESENTATION BY SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR CHRISTEASCU
FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION OF S-C MEMBERS PRECLUDED ANY NGO INTER-
CONVENTIONS. BEFORE LEAVING, DURHAM SECURED THE ASSISTANCE
OF BEN WHITAKER (UK) WHO ARRANGED WITH THE SECRETARIAT TO
HAVE STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY THE MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP.
TEXT OF STATEMENT FOLLOWS, AT THE END OF THIS MESSAGE. THE

SECOND COUNCIL STATEMENT CIRCULATED AS UN DOCUMENT E/CN.4/SUB.2/NGO/67, WAS FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT IN REFTEL. THERE WERE NO COMMENTS BY S-C MEMBERS UPON PRESENTATION OF STATEMENTS.

3. COMMENT: THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT DURING 1976 SESSION SMIRNOV WAS CHALLENGED BY CAREY (US) AND WHITAKER (UK), EXPERTS ON MATTERS OF VOTING AND ALTERING SUMMARY RECORDS. AFTER SESSION ENDED, SMIRNOV VOWED THAT HE WOULD SEE THAT BOTH THE US AND UK WERE CITED FOR HR VIOLATIONS DURING THE 1977 SESSION. THE JIMMIE DURHAM PRESENTATION IS NO DOUBT SMIRNOV'S WAY OF CARRYING OUT HIS THREAT. MISSION BELIEVES DURHAM STATEMENT IS A PREVIEW OF WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED DURING NGO CONFERENCE ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN THE AMERICAS. END COMMENT.

4. ACCORDING TO WHITAKER, DURHAM IS CIRCULATING RUMOR THAT THE US IS ATTEMPTING TO HAVE SEPTEMBER NGO CONFERENCE CANCELLED BECAUSE INDIAN CRITICISM WILL BE EXTREMELY HARSH ABOUT CONDITIONS OF INDIANS IN U.S. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REBUT SUCH STATEMENTS AND MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT AS TO WHY WE WILL OR WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN MEETING.

5. TEXT OF STATEMENT BY INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: "FIRST, WE WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE AND ENCOURAGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 GENEVA 07204 01 OF 02 231750Z

THE SUB-COMMISSION ON ITS DEDICATION TO THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND MINORITY PEOPLES. THIS PRINCIPLE, AS THE MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMISSION OBVIOUSLY RECOGNIZE, IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO TRUE PEACE IN THE WORLD, WHICH CAN ONLY COME THROUGH JUSTICE.

"WE, AS AMERICAN INDIANS, ARE URGED TO SPEAK CONCERNING THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, BECAUSE WE ARE THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE OF TWO ENTIRE CONTINENTS IN WHICH BASIC RIGHTS ARE DENIED TO US.

"THE PROBLEMS AND STRUGGLES OF INDIAN PEOPLE IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA ARE THE MOST SEVERE, AND ARE NOW BEGINNING TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WE APPLAUD THESE BEGINNINGS AND URGE MORE IMMEDIATE ACTION.

"BUT THE RIGHTS OF INDIANS IN THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN A SUBJECT WHICH HAS BEEN ALMOST COMPLETELY IGNORED. YET OUR CONDITION IN THE UNITED STATES IS ONE OF ABJECT POVERTY.

"WE, AMERICAN INDIANS IN THE U.S., HAVE HAD VALID SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS FOR UNTOLD THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THROUGH

TREATIES, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS ENTERED INTO LEGAL GUARANTEES THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHTS TO AN ADEQUATE LAND BASE AND THE RIGHT TO PRACTICE OUR OWN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS WITHOUT INTERFERENCE AND WITHOUT BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE LARGER SOCIETY.

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 07204 02 OF 02 231801Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 DHA-02 OIC-02 PM-05 H-01
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 7204

"BUT ONLY CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FACTS: WHEN COLUMBUS FIRST DISCOVERED THE SO-CALLED NEW WORLD THERE WERE MORE THAN TWELVE MILLION PEOPLE LIVING IN WHAT IS NOW THE UNITED STATES. TODAY WE ARE ONLY ABOUT ONE MILLION. IN OTHER WORDS, WE HAVE LOST AT LEAST 92 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION. YET ACCORDING TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S OWN REPORTS, IT IS ALLEGED THAT THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE HAS STERILIZED -- WITHOUT THEIR PROPER CONSENT -- 24 PERCENT OF OUR WOMEN.

"IN THE U.S., ONE OF THE RICHEST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, 75 PERCENT OF THE INDIAN POPULATION SUFFERS FROM MALNUTRITION AND FROM DISEASES RELATED TO MALNUTRITION. MOST INDIAN PEOPLE LIVE IN SHACKS WITH NEITHER ELECTRICITY, RUNNING WATER NOR PLUMBING.

"MORE THAN 75 PERCENT OF ALL INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE U.S. ARE UNEMPLOYED AND THE AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AN INDIAN FAMILY IS NOT EVEN ONE-THIRD THAT OF THE U.S. AVERAGE.

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PAGE 02 GENEVA 07204 02 OF 02 231801Z

"THROUGH TREATIES, WE WERE GUARANTEED AN ADEQUATE LAND BASE, YET TODAY OUR LAND IS BEING TAKEN FROM US AT THE RATE OF 45,000 ACRES A YEAR, AND WHAT LAND WE HAVE LEFT IS BEING DESTROYED BY THE LARGE CORPORATIONS IN THEIR SEARCH FOR CHEAP COAL, PETROLEUM AND URANIUM.

"UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS, SELF-DETERMINATION IS NOT POSSIBLE. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR CONTINUED EXISTENCE IS IMPORTANT, NOT ONLY TO OURSELVES, BUT TO HUMANITY.

"WE ARE AMERICAN INDIAN HUMANS. OUR WAY OF BEING HUMANS IS TO BE INDIAN -- AND THAT IS OUR ONLY WAY. THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF SELF-DETERMINATION.

"FINALLY WE WOULD CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO A DOCUMENT WE HAVE PREPARED FOR THIS SUB-COMMISSION, NGO/NR. 67.

"THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALLOWING US TO SPEAK AN INDIAN VOICE." UNQUOTE. VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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